Calendar No. 1410

82D CONGRESS, 2d Session — SENATE — REPORT No. 1483

UNIV. OF MICH.
1952
LAW LIBRARY

AUTHORIZING THE ADMINISTRATOR OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS TO TRANSFER, WITHOUT REIMBURSEMENT, TO THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY THE BIRMINGHAM GENERAL HOSPITAL, VAN NUYS, CALIF.

APRIL 24, 1952.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. MURRAY, from the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 2729]

The Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, to whom was referred the bill (S. 2729) to authorize the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs to transfer, without reimbursement, to the Department of the Army the Birmingham General Hospital, Van Nuys, Calif., having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

EXPLANATION OF BILL

To authorize the Veterans' Administration to transfer, without reimbursement, to the Department of the Army, the Birmingham General Hospital, Van Nuys, Calif. The current Army hospital-bed program for fiscal years 1951 and 1952 requires the utilization to the maximum extent feasible of all of its currently available hospital facilities to meet operating Army hospital-bed requirements. This complete utilization of Army hospital beds leaves no reserve to meet any increase in operating bed requirements for the Army in continental United States. Sudden increases in operating bed requirements or higher hospitalization rates for increased numbers of battle casualties or both, can be expected. An operating reserve is necessary to meet such eventualities.

The acquisition of the Birmingham General Hospital by the Army is required to provide 1,500 operating reserve beds in the southern California area. The facility will be maintained in a stand-by status for operation when required as an Army specialized treatment center to provide medical care and treatment in southern California. It is the most suitable of all hospital installations in that general area avail-

able to the Army for the intended purpose. This hospital was formerly under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Army and was transferred to the Veterans' Administration on May 1, 1946. The Veterans' Administration is not utilizing this hospital and is agreeable to its transfer to the Department of the Army

GENERAL STATEMENT

Pursuant to section 102 of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (58 Stat. 204; 38 U. S. C. 693b), the Birmingham General Hospital, Van Nuys, Calif., was transferred to the Veterans' Administration by the War Department on May 1, 1946, without reimbursement of funds. The Veterans' Administration subsequently acquired the United States Naval Hospital, Long Beach, Calif., which it is presently operating as a 1,600-bed hospital with a preponderance of general medical and surgical patients. In addition, the Veterans' Administration has acquired a site in Los Angeles, Calif., on which will be erected a 1,000-bed hospital predominantly for psychiatric and neurological patients. Accordingly, this agency has no further requirement for the Birmingham General Hospital. By a memorandum of agreement, revocable at will by the Veterans' Administration, the use of that hospital was assigned to the Department of the Army, effective July 9, 1951.

COST AND BUDGET DATA

This legislation was proposed by the Department of Defense and approved by the Veterans' Administration and the Bureau of the Budget. This hospital was constructed by the Department of the Army at a cost of $4,730,938. It was transferred to the Veterans' Administration at no cost. The transfer to the Department of the Army will be without cost to the Government.

The reports from the Department of Defense and the Veterans' Administration are as follows:

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE,
Washington 25, D. C., February 14, 1952.

Hon. RICHARD B. RUSSELL,
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services,
United States Senate.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: There is forwarded herewith a draft of legislation to authorize the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs to transfer, without reimbursement, to the Department of the Army the Birmingham General Hospital, Van Nuys, Calif.

This proposal is a part of the Department of Defense legislative program for 1952 and the Bureau of the Budget advises that it has no objection to the presentation of this bill for the consideration of the Congress. The Department of Defense recommends that it be enacted by the Congress.

Purpose of the legislation.—The current Army hospital bed program for fiscal years 1951 and 1952 requires the utilization to the maximum extent feasible of all of its currently available hospital facilities to meet operating Army hospital bed requirements. This complete utilization of Army hospital beds leaves no reserve to meet any increase in operating bed requirements for the Army in continental United States. Sudden increases in operating bed requirements or higher hospitalization rates for increased numbers of battle casualties or both, can be expected. An operating reserve is necessary to meet such eventualities.

The acquisition of the Birmingham General Hospital by the Army is required to provide 1,500 operating reserve beds in the southern California area. The facility will be maintained in a stand-by status for operation when required as an Army specialized treatment center to provide medical care and treatment in

southern California. It is the most suitable of all hospital installations in that general area available to the Army for the intended purpose. This hospital was formerly under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Army and was transferred to the Veterans' Administration on May 1, 1946. The Veterans' Administration is not utilizing this hospital and is agreeable to its transfer to the Department of the Army.

Legislative references.—None.

Cost and budget data.—This hospital was constructed by the Department of the Army at a cost of $4,730,938. It was transferred to the Veterans' Administration at no cost. The transfer to the Department of the Army will be without cost to the Government.

Department of Defense action agency.—The Department of the Army has been designated as the representative of the Department of Defense for this legislation.

Sincerely yours,

CHARLES A. COOLIDGE.

A BILL To authorize the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs to transfer, without reimbursement, to the Department of the Army the Birmingham General Hospital, Van Nuys, California

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs is authorized to transfer, without reimbursement, to the Department of the Army the Birmingham General Hospital, Van Nuys, California, together with all improvements and appurtenant facilities, and such equipment and other personal property as is located on the premises on the date of approval of this Act.

VETERANS' ADMINISTRATION,
Washington 25, D. C., March 17, 1952.

Hon. JAMES E. MURRAY,
Chairman, Committee on Labor and Public Welfare,
United States Senate, Washington 25, D. C.

DEAR SENATOR MURRAY: Further reference is made to your letter of March 4, 1952, requesting a report by the Veterans' Administration, relative to S. 2729, Eighty-second Congress, a bill to authorize the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs to transfer, without reimbursement, to the Department of the Army the Birmingham General Hospital, Van Nuys, Calif., which provides as follows:

"That the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs is authorized to transfer, without reimbursement, to the Department of the Army the Birmingham General Hospital, Van Nuys, California, together with all improvements and appurtenant facilities, and such equipment and other personal property as is located on the premises on the date of approval of this Act."

Pursuant to section 102 of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (58 Stat. 204; 38 U. S. C. 693b), the Birmingham General Hospital, Van Nuys, Calif., was transferred to the Veterans' Administration by the War Department on May 1, 1946, without reimbursement of funds. The Veterans' Administration subsequently acquired the United States Naval Hospital, Long Beach, Calif., which it is presently operating as a 1,600-bed hospital with a preponderance of general medical and surgical patients. In addition, the Veterans' Administration has acquired a site in Los Angeles, Calif., on which will be erected a 1,000-bed hospital predominantly for psychiatric and neurological patients. Accordingly, this agency has no further requirement for the Birmingham General Hospital. By a memorandum of agreement, revocable at will by the Veterans' Administration, the use of that hospital was assigned to the Department of the Army, effective July 9, 1951.

In view of the foregoing, the Veterans' Administration would interpose no objection to the favorable consideration of the bill.

It may be noted that a bill (S. 2731, 82d Cong.) is pending before your committee which proposes, among other things, to permit the Departments of the Army, Navy, and Air Force to acquire from the Veterans' Administration, without reimbursement, hospitals and related facilities and equipment no longer needed by the Veterans' Administration.

Advice has been received from the Bureau of the Budget that there would be no objection to the submission of this report to your committee.

Sincerely yours,

O. W. CLARK
(For Carl R. Gray, Jr., Administrator).

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

Since the provisions of this bill represent new legislation rather than amendments to existing law, there are no changes to be indicated in compliance with subsection (4) of rule XXIX of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

○